

TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

ISSUE: LAND USE

Comments from Planning Team at 9/15/03 Meeting

Communication/Coordination

- We have heard from several speakers that there is need for more coordination among stakeholders. So many stakeholders, it is difficult to bring them together. So many jurisdictions in Michigan and not in other states.
- There appears to be a multitude of decisions in various entities; need to make an effort more on regional planning, especially as it relates to transportation.
- In some cases, township vs. city gets a lot of finger pointing. Counties are responsible for maintaining roads but decision is at the city level. If use will put increase demand on roads, need to have townships/cities talking to the counties.

Context Sensitive Design

- Want to know more about pros and cons of Context Sensitive Design. Need more information.
- Getting people to change their behaviors can be difficult. Campaigns to do so can take years and years. We have the studies and know what they say. but it will take a long time to get people to change. Money being spent on all of these studies may need to be coordinated in efforts to help bring about change. Believe using Context Sensitive Design will help. Let people know the State is on their side to make things better and will have the leadership ability to show what they need to do.
- Context Sensitive Design – In Federal Highway one thing that causes a lot of concern is litigation and liability. AASHTO standards are there for a reason. It is safe to lean on these rules. In experimental projects, if someone gets hurt, could end up in court.

Court Involvement

- Found it disturbing when talking about courts and developers that the courts usually rule the developers should go ahead and that it is their right to put in the infrastructure without taking into account the hidden costs of that.
- One thing we didn't hear much about was courts. So many local communities try to do good land use planning but if developers find it not to their liking, the courts have supported the developers.
- Communities get the behaviors they are rewarded for; i.e., developers winning in court when maybe they shouldn't be. Need to assess what the rewards are for communities making bad decisions and try to find other rewards that will encourage better behaviors.

Education

- Lack of understanding in the public why planning is necessary. Need for education.
- Importance of educating public officials. Need to educate about their role and authority. The citizens also need to be educated, as well, on how we can participate in and be affected by the cross between transportation and land use. Encourage public to become more involved. Good resource would be taking citizen planner courses, for example at MSU.
- Tri County tracks local officials on an annual basis and over years has shown a pattern of about 20% turnover. In a matter of five years, you have a large turnover with local officials. Education for local officials needs to be done on an ongoing basis.

Funding

- Won't tell people where to live and where to work. That is our customer right now. Need adequate funding for safety issues.
- A couple of speakers talked about choices we make and the cost for those choices but there doesn't seem to be any discussion about how to educate the public on the real price tags, direct and indirect costs for those choices.
- Comment on full 10% from MTF to CTF. Make sure everyone understands that would mean about a \$30M hit to the current road and bridge program. Not sure anyone agrees that we can take this hit; but may need to look at other ways to have this happen. Most successful public transportation systems across the nation are funded regionally. Need to look for innovative ways to find the funding.
- For consideration, maybe we need to look at new ways to fund road and bridge repairs. Funding is a priority issue.
- Several years ago CTF gave up substantial money to improve roads and bridges. The idea is if funding increased then this money would come back. Have to fully fund at some time.

General Comments

- I want to compliment the speakers and the planning team that put together the agenda. I learned a lot today. I feel that the component of the developers was missing. Be sensitive to the perspective of the developers and job providers as this issue is debated. I understand that the planning team tried to get others involved and it didn't work out.
- It was interesting that Michigan is a sprawl leader among the states and understanding some of the reasons why they are.
- Transportation Land Use - A lot of discussion had to do with transportation and land use at a local level. With regards to state trunk line system, the higher level system, the function of those roads is very different than the roads to local access to local communities. Need to talk about the investment of transportation into state trunk line systems vs. local access systems. Very different at high level than at low level.
- There really isn't a simple solution; but need a combination of solutions.
- Having a policy in place may make it tough for future projects coming in. Always going to be a balancing situation. Some times land use may win out, some times safety, or economic development, or a combination may be the solution. There is no hard answer; it is a balancing act.
- Planning Commission has never had a policy that says when we consider an expansion policy that we are measuring it against a land use perspective. Will need to deal with.
- Pedestrian connections are also important. Accessible sidewalks are a very important part of the transportation system working.

GM Project

- Keep in mind the example of GM is important. A situation where 40+ communities came together in a collaborative approach. Keep in mind communities can come together.
- As a State, we need to start having the mentality that was present when dealing with GM: If one of us doesn't win, then we all loose.
- On GM Regional Stamping facility, does the group consider that to be sprawl? It will create more development around it and is in an undeveloped area in Delta Township.

- When looking at the existing facilities GM has, needed to sacrifice greenfield for the good of the public. They did not waste old GM facilities or scrap them for new facilities. I don't look at that as sprawl. Worked with the local government.
- Land use can respond to transportation or transportation can respond to land use. In the GM situation, land use responded to transportation. Believe it is the way it ought to work.
- Some feel it would be sprawl. They displaced someone to build the GM plant. What will happen to property where the work is coming from? In a bigger picture, I see it as sprawl.
- In the case of GM, where you have rail, expressway, and a large chunk of property, it was a good place to develop if you want the auto industry in Michigan. If we kept state trunk line as originally intended, then wouldn't have some problems today. GM is using state trunk line as a local road.
- Point in asking the "sprawl" question is to show it is a subjective issue. If Tri-county area had a very restrictive land use policy in place, the GM project may not have happened. We are not measuring it against land use.

Local Projects

- On bypasses, one of things mentioned was limited access to roadways. They are there so businesses can't use the local roads.
- Limited access roads are desirable to the public. Important on a local level as well as statewide level, for example access management.

Planning

- Some of the people think there is too much planning. People see study after study and don't see changes. First reaction is we don't need more studies and plans but we need people to do something. Need action. Public doesn't want more planning but more action.
- Planning and congestion were talked about. Talked about cul-de-sacs, etc., but didn't discuss some of the planning where we put our state trunk lines, some of the newer roads, and how that impacts our communities. There is a connection about where we choose to put our roads and how that impacts land use. Some of this seemed to be missing.
- Need to be flexible on road design. Not one standard to fit all of the concerns. Instead of designing roads to meet land use, may need to design land use to meet roads.
- Learned from Tri County presentation, this particular MPO had courage to connect planning with their action. Screened projects against the map and endorsed the same vision. Believe that other MPO's could move into the same direction to show how to connect land use and transportation in a meaningful way.
- Comment in Brad's report, page 2 of his handout. Would like to see some level/recognition of this problem and how to correct it. Some believe there is too much government involvement and too much planning but there is a disconnect. Need to recognize that we can't continue to react to the land use.
- Brad mentioned a benefit of developers coming up with a traffic study. Put it on the developers to provide this information without putting big impact on the local planners.

Public Transportation

- Public perception sees a value for public transportation in the community.
- May be omitted because it is here or something people don't want, but rail was never mentioned as a tool to make communities more accessible. At some point in the Summit, certainly should give some voice to rail as an option, not just roads and

vehicles. Also consider possibilities about air access and how to utilize these in the market place.

- At the Summit need to spend time in recognition of what is exactly needed to support public transportation and land use perspective in design. What land use goal would support public transportation?

Survey Results

- We are receiving conflicting messages from the public on the survey findings. They say they want one thing and then in the next sentence they want something else. Not easy to come to consensus on these issues.
- There is a disconnect. General public doesn't necessarily see public transportation as a solution.
- Found the results of the survey interesting. In many instances, we had paralleled results in surveys conducted in SE Michigan. Key point was that people know what they want and are not being forced to live with what they don't want. If true, it makes it more difficult to have the State, as a whole, deal with land use issue from a state level down to a regional level.
- Need in Michigan, from the survey results, recognize that people will have incentives, either money or some way to make them change their habits. Incentives may need to cause that to happen.
- Disconnect between what people say they want and how they act.